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(56) References cited:
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EP 0 691 865 B1

Description

This invention relates to a device for the administration of powdered medicaments by inhalation, more particularly to a multiple-dose inhalation device with metering means for dispensing pre-determined doses from a medicament reservoir.

European Patent Application 407028 (Fisons plc) discloses a multiple-dose inhalation device in which a dose of medicament is metered by abrading a fixed volume from a compacted body of powdered medicament. The metered dose is then entrained in a through-going pathway of the device and is inhaled by the patient, the means for abrading being, for example, a helical blade. Other devices which use the principle of abrading a compacted body of powdered medicament are disclosed in International Patent Applications WO 92/04067 (Boehringer Ingelheim KG) and WO 93/24165 (GGU Gesellschaft für Gesundheits- und Umweltforschung mbH & Co. Vertriebs KG).

Such devices may offer improved dose consistency when compared to multiple-dose devices which rely on gravitational force to meter a dose of medicament from a reservoir. However, inaccuracies in dosing may still occur due to incomplete removal of the abraded dose from the compacted body, or by the removal of additional quantities of powder from the body during inhalation by the patient. Furthermore, if such devices are inadvertently dropped quantities of medicament could break off from the compacted body and enter the through-going pathway of the device, resulting in a multiple dose being administered when the patient next uses the device.

We have now found that these disadvantages can be overcome or substantially mitigated by providing a shuttering system in the device which is capable of isolating the compacted body of medicament from the through-going pathway of the device.

Thus, according to the invention, there is provided a medicament inhalation device including a housing having a through-going pathway connecting an air inlet with an air outlet, a medicament reservoir adapted to receive a compacted body of powdered medicament, and metering means for dispensing a predetermined dose of medicament from the reservoir into the through-going pathway, the metering means including means for abrading the compacted body; characterised in that the device is provided with a shutter movable between a first position in which the compacted body is isolated from the through-going pathway and a second position in which the compacted body is in communication with the through-going pathway such that a dose of medicament can be dispensed from the reservoir into the through-going pathway.

The means for abrading the compacted body preferably includes a blade which cuts, planes, scrapes or otherwise erodes a surface of the compacted body by relative rotation or sliding between them. For example, the blade may have a helical shape, in which case the

dose abraded from the compacted body of medicament will depend *inter alia* upon the pitch of the helix, the diameter of the blade, the density of the compacted body, and the angle through which the blade is rotated. Alternatively, the means for abrading the compacted body may include a brush or other abrasive surface.

The shutter is preferably biased into the first position in which the compacted body is isolated from the through-going pathway.

The shutter may be mounted on a carrier, the carrier being adapted to move within the housing of the device, e.g. in an axial direction. Movement of the shutter between the first and second positions may then be effected by the action of a cam on the carrier. The carrier is preferably kept in contact with the cam surface by biasing means, e.g. a cantilever, provided on the carrier which bears against a stationary part of the device. The cam is preferably arranged such that the shutter moves from the first position to the second position prior to the metering of a predetermined dose of medicament from the reservoir, and returns to the first position once the predetermined dose of medicament has been metered. In addition, the shutter preferably returns to the first position before the patient inhales the dose of medicament from the device.

When the shutter returns to the first position before the patient inhales the dose of medicament from the device, the shutter is preferably adapted to sever the metered dose of medicament from the reservoir upon moving from the second position to the first position. The dose of medicament is then deposited in a holding chamber located in the through-going pathway, where it stays until the patient inhales from the device. When the shutter is adapted to sever the metered dose of medicament from the reservoir it preferably comprises a metal blade.

The through-going pathway of the device may also include a dispersion chamber located between the holding chamber and the mouthpiece. The dispersion chamber may be provided with tangential air inlets which serve to provide a swirling flow of air in the chamber thus assisting the dispersion of the medicament.

The shutter movement and metering operations may be controlled by a drive mechanism located within the device.

The drive mechanism is preferably associated with a drive sleeve rotatably mounted on the housing of the device. Rotation of the drive sleeve causes rotation of a cam which is translated into the axial movement of the carrier and shutter, and also the relative movement of the metering means and the compacted body of medicament required for abrasion of the compacted body. In this manner the shutter movement and metering operations may be performed sequentially in response to a single action by the patient. The degree of rotation and hence the amount of medicament abraded is preferably controlled by rotation control means, for example a ratchet associated with the drive means and/or stops provided on the housing, which will only permit rotation

through a predetermined angle for each dose.

The shutter carrier can conveniently be configured such that it largely separates the drive mechanism for the device from the through-going pathway. This has the advantage that it reduces the risk of ingress of medica- 5 ment into the drive mechanism.

Compacted bodies of powdered medicament include bodies of medicament produced by compressing a sample of loose powder so that the medicament particles hold together. The degree of compaction obtained will clearly depend upon the compression 10 force applied to the sample of loose powder, as described in European Patent Application 407028 (Fisons plc), the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference. However, in general, the degree of compaction will be sufficient to impart said compacted body with structural integrity such that a plurality of unit doses of medicament can metered therefrom by abra- 15 sion.

The compacted body of inhalation medicament 20 may have any convenient external shape, for example cylindrical or brick-like. However, we prefer the compacted body to have an annular configuration. Annular compacted bodies of medicament may be made by the method described in International Patent Application 25 WO 94/00291 (Fisons plc), the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Medicaments which may be administered from the device according to the invention may include any active ingredients which are conventionally administered by 30 inhalation in powdered form. Such active ingredients include drugs for use in the prophylactic or remedial treatment of reversible obstructive airways disease. Specific active ingredients which may be mentioned include salts of cromoglycic acid, e.g. sodium cromogly- 35 cate; salts of nedocromil, e.g. nedocromil sodium; inhaled steroids such as beclomethasone dipropionate, tiptredane, budesonide and fluticasone; anticholinergic agents such as ipratropium bromide; bronchodilators, e.g. salmeterol, salbutamol, reproterol, terbutaline, isoprenaline and fenoterol, and salts thereof. If desired a mixture of active ingredients, for example, a mixture of sodium cromoglycate and a bronchodilator, such as salbutamol, reproterol, isoprenaline, terbutaline, fenote- 40 rol or a salt of any one thereof, may be used.

The devices according to the present invention may be designed for limited use, i.e. they may be supplied with an integral compacted body of medicament, the device being discarded when this is exhausted; or they may be reusable, i.e. replacement compacted bodies 50 may be provided for insertion into the device.

Thus, according to a further aspect of the invention we provide a device as described above, wherein the medicament reservoir contains a compacted body of powdered medicament.

The devices of the present invention overcome the disadvantages of prior art devices in that the dosing consistency is improved because the shutter severs the dose cleanly at the end of the dose abrasion operation;

they prevent the patient back-breathing onto the compacted body of medicament thereby providing improved moisture protection for the medicament; they are easier to use. Furthermore, since the shutter isolates the compacted body of medicament from the through-going pathway during inhalation, it prevents the patient inad- 5 vertently inhaling additional drug out of the reservoir.

Although the invention has been described for use in oral inhalation of medicaments, it is also suitable for the administration of nasal medicaments by inhalation. The necessary adaptation for this mode of administra- 10 tion will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art.

A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the following drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a longitudinal view in partial section of a device according to the present invention in the first/rest position (dispersion chamber not illus- 15 trated);

Figure 2 is a longitudinal view in partial section of the device of Figure 1 in the second/metering position;

Figure 3 is a longitudinal section showing in detail the shutter, reservoir and through-going pathway of a preferred device according to the invention in the first/rest position;

Figure 4 is a longitudinal section of the device of Figure 3 in the second/metering position;

Figure 5 is a partial section of the shutter and reservoir of the device of Figure 3 along the line V-V; and Figure 6 is a partial section of the shutter and reservoir of the device of Figure 4 along the line VI-VI.

A preferred device according to the invention includes a housing (1) having a through-going pathway (2) connecting an air inlet (3) with an air outlet in the form of mouthpiece (4) having a mouthpiece cover (not shown). A dispersion chamber (5) having tangential air inlets (6, 6a) is located in the through-going pathway 40 between air inlet (3) and mouthpiece (4).

A generally cylindrical medicament reservoir (7) containing an annular compacted body of powdered inhalation medicament (8) is rotatably mounted on the housing (1) adjacent to the through-going pathway (2) 45 upstream from the dispersion chamber (5).

A shutter (9) comprising a metal blade (10) is mounted on a carrier (11) which is adapted to move axially within the housing between a first/rest position [Figure 1] in which the compacted body (8) is isolated from the through-going pathway (2), and a second/metering position [Figure 2] in which the compacted body (8) is in communication with the through-going pathway (2). The end of carrier (11) remote from the shutter (9) is provided with a lug (12) adapted to interact with a cam (13) 50 provided on the inside of a drive sleeve (14) rotatably mounted on the housing (1). The carrier (11) is biased against the cam (13) by a half cantilever (15) provided on the carrier (11) which bears against an exterior wall

of the dispersion chamber (5). The end of the carrier (11) remote from the shutter (9) is also provided with a disc (16) having a diameter generally corresponding to that of the interior of the housing (1). Disc (16) thus separates the cam (13) and reservoir drive mechanism (described below) from the through-going pathway (2) thus reducing the risk of ingress of medicament into the drive mechanism.

Drive sleeve (14) is also provided with a reservoir drive mechanism (not shown) which is adapted to rotate the medicament reservoir (7) through a predetermined angle relative to the housing (1), the angle of rotation being limited by a stop (17) provided on the exterior of the housing.

A helical blade (18) is fixedly mounted in the housing between the reservoir (7) and the mouthpiece (4), such that the blade (18) abuts against the face of the body of compacted medicament (8) contained in the reservoir (7). The body of compacted medicament (8) is further urged towards blade (18) by a compression spring (19) which acts against the outer wall of medicament reservoir (7) and the interior of drive sleeve (14).

In use, drive sleeve (14) is rotated in the direction of arrow A in Figure 1. The initial part of the rotation causes the cam (13) to move carrier (11) axially within the housing (1) towards mouthpiece (4). The shutter (9) thus moves from the first/rest position [Figure 1] to the second/metering position [Figure 2]. Once the compacted body (7) is in communication with the through-going pathway (2), further rotation operates the reservoir drive means (not shown) thus advancing the reservoir (7) and compacted body (8) through an angle of 60°, the degree of rotation being limited by stop (17) provided on the outside of the housing (1). As the reservoir (7) rotates helical blade (18) abrades a predetermined quantity of powdered medicament from the face of compacted body (8).

The drive sleeve (14) is then rotated in the direction of arrow B in Figure 2. Cam surface (13) rotates back to its original position allowing the shutter (9) to return to its first/rest position under the bias of cantilever (15). As the shutter (9) returns to the first/rest position the metal blade (10) severs the abraded dose of medicament from the compacted body (8), the dose being deposited in holding chamber (20) in the through-going pathway (2), the chamber (20) being defined in part by the blade (18) and shutter (9). The patient then removes the mouthpiece cover (not shown) and inhales at the mouthpiece (4) drawing air through air inlet (3) and through-going pathway (2). The dose of medicament drawn into dispersion chamber (5) where it is entrained in the air flow and inhaled by the patient. During inhalation the shutter (9) prevents additional medicament from being scoured from the compacted body (8) since it isolates the compacted body (8) from the through-going pathway (2).

Claims

1. A medicament inhalation device including a hous-

ing (1) having a through-going pathway (2) connecting an air inlet (3) with an air outlet (4), a medicament reservoir (7) adapted to receive a compacted body of powdered medicament (8), and metering means for dispensing a predetermined dose of medicament from the reservoir (7) into the through-going pathway (2), the metering means including means (18) for abrading the compacted body (8); characterised in that the device is provided with a shutter (9) movable between a first position in which the compacted body (8) is isolated from the through-going pathway (2) and a second position in which the compacted body (8) is in communication with the through-going pathway (2) such that a dose of medicament can be dispensed from the reservoir (7) into the through-going pathway (2).

2. A device according to Claim 1, wherein the medicament reservoir (7) contains a compacted body of powdered medicament (8).
3. A device according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the shutter (9) is biased into the first position in which the compacted body (8) is isolated from the through-going pathway (2).
4. A device according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the shutter (9) moves from the first position to the second position prior to the metering of a predetermined dose of medicament from the reservoir (7).
5. A device according to Claim 4, wherein the shutter (9) returns to the first position once the predetermined dose of medicament has been metered from the reservoir (7).
6. A device according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the shutter (9) is mounted on a carrier (11) adapted to move axially within the housing (1).
7. A device according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein movement of the shutter (9) is effected by a cam (13).
8. A device according to Claim 7, wherein the cam (13) is located in a drive sleeve (14) rotatably mounted on the housing (1).
9. A device according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the shutter (9) is adapted to sever the metered dose of medicament from the reservoir (7) upon moving from the second to the first position.
10. A device according to Claim 9, wherein the shutter (9) comprises a metal blade (10).

11. A method of dispensing a predetermined dose of powdered medicament from a compacted body of powdered medicament in an inhalation device as claimed in any one of Claims 2 to 10 comprising moving the shutter between a first position in which the compacted body is isolated from the through-going pathway and a second position in which the compacted body is in communication with the through-going pathway such that a predetermined dose of medicament can be dispensed into the through-going pathway by abrading the compacted body.
12. A method as claimed in Claim 11 further comprising moving the shutter into the first position before a patient inhales the dose of medicament from the device.
6. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Verschuß (9) auf einem Träger (11) montiert ist, der innerhalb des Gehäuses (1) axial bewegbar ist.
7. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei die Bewegung des Verschlusses (9) durch eine Nocke (13) bewirkt wird.
8. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 7, wobei sich die Nocke (13) in einer drehbar auf dem Gehäuse (1) angebrachten Antriebshülse (14) befindet.
9. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Verschuß (9) so ausgelegt ist, daß er die bemessene Medikamentendosis aus dem Vorratsbehälter (7) bei der Bewegung aus der zweiten in die erste Position abtrennt.

Patentansprüche

1. Medikamentinhalationsvorrichtung, enthaltend ein Gehäuse (1) mit einem einen Lufteinlaß (3) mit einem Luftauslaß (4) verbindenden Durchgang (2), einen Medikamentenvorratsbehälter (7) zur Aufnahme eines Preßkörpers aus pulverförmigem Medikament (8) und Bemessungsmittel zur Abgabe einer vorbestimmten Medikamentendosis aus dem Vorratsbehälter (7) in den Durchgang (2), wobei die Bemessungsmittel Mittel (18) zum Abschaben des Preßkörpers (8) enthalten, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Vorrichtung mit einem Verschuß (9) versehen ist, der zwischen einer ersten Position, in welcher der Preßkörper (8) vom Durchgang (2) isoliert ist, und einer zweiten Position, in welcher der Preßkörper (8) mit dem Durchgang (2) in Verbindung steht, so daß eine Medikamentendosis aus dem Vorratsbehälter (7) in den Durchgang (2) abgegeben werden kann, bewegbar ist.
2. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Medikamentenvorratsbehälter (7) einen Preßkörper aus pulverförmigem Medikament (8) enthält.
3. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei der Verschuß (9) in die erste Position vorgespannt ist, in welcher der Preßkörper (8) vom Durchgang (2) isoliert ist.
4. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei sich der Verschuß (9) von der ersten Position in die zweite Position bewegt, bevor eine vorbestimmte Medikamentendosis aus dem Vorratsbehälter (7) bemessen wird.
5. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 4, wobei der Verschuß (9) in die erste Position zurückkehrt, sobald die vorbestimmte Medikamentendosis aus dem Vorratsbehälter (7) bemessen worden ist.
10. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 9, wobei der Verschuß (9) eine Metallklinge (10) aufweist.
11. Verfahren zur Abgabe einer vorbestimmten Dosis eines pulverförmigen Medikaments von einem Preßkörper des pulverförmigen Medikaments in einer Inhalationseinrichtung, wie in einem der Ansprüche 2 bis 10 beansprucht, bei welchem der Verschuß zwischen einer ersten Position, in welcher der Preßkörper vom Durchgang isoliert ist, und einer zweiten Position bewegt wird, in welcher der Preßkörper mit dem Durchgang in Verbindung steht, so daß eine vorbestimmte Medikamentendosis durch Abschaben des Preßkörpers in den Durchgang abgegeben werden kann.
12. Verfahren nach Anspruch 11, bei welchem weiters der Verschuß in die erste Position bewegt wird, bevor ein Patient die Medikamentendosis aus der Vorrichtung inhaliert.

Revendications

1. Dispositif d'inhalation de médicament comprenant un boîtier (1) présentant un conduit de traversée (2) reliant une entrée d'air (3) à une sortie d'air (4), un réservoir de médicament (7) à même de recevoir un comprimé de médicament pulvérulent (8), et un moyen de dosage destiné à distribuer une dose prédéterminée de médicament du réservoir (7) dans le conduit de traversée (2), le moyen de dosage comprenant un moyen (18) destiné à abraser le comprimé (8); caractérisé en ce que le dispositif est pourvu d'un obturateur (9) pouvant être déplacé entre une première position, dans laquelle le comprimé (8) est isolé du conduit de traversée (2), et une seconde position, dans laquelle le comprimé (8) est en communication avec le conduit de traversée (2), de telle sorte qu'une dose de médicament puisse être distribuée du réservoir (7) dans le

conduit de traversée (2).

première position avant qu'un patient n'inhale la dose de médicament du dispositif.

2. Dispositif suivant la revendication 1, dans lequel le réservoir de médicament (7) contient un comprimé de médicament pulvérulent (8). 5
3. Dispositif suivant la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) est sollicité élastiquement dans la première position, dans laquelle le comprimé (8) est isolé du conduit de traversée (2). 10
4. Dispositif suivant l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) se déplace de la première position à la seconde position avant le dosage d'une dose prédéterminée de médicament du réservoir (7). 15
5. Dispositif suivant la revendication 4, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) revient à la première position une fois que la dose prédéterminée de médicament a été dosée du réservoir (7). 20
6. Dispositif suivant l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) est monté sur un porte-obturateur (11) à même de se déplacer axialement dans le boîtier (1). 25
7. Dispositif suivant l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le déplacement de l'obturateur (9) est effectué par une came (13). 30
8. Dispositif suivant la revendication 7, dans lequel la came (13) est située dans une douille d'entraînement (14) montée à rotation sur le boîtier (1). 35
9. Dispositif suivant l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) est à même de sectionner la dose mesurée de médicament du réservoir (7) lors du déplacement de la seconde à la première position. 40
10. Dispositif suivant la revendication 9, dans lequel l'obturateur (9) comporte une lame métallique (10).
11. Procédé de distribution d'une dose prédéterminée de médicament pulvérulent à partir d'un comprimé de médicament pulvérulent dans un dispositif d'inhalation suivant l'une quelconque des revendications 2 à 10, comprenant le fait que, l'obturateur est déplacé entre une première position, dans laquelle le comprimé est isolé du conduit de traversée, et une seconde position, dans laquelle le comprimé est en communication avec le conduit de traversée de telle sorte qu'une dose prédéterminée de médicament puisse être distribuée dans le conduit de traversée par abrasion du comprimé. 45 50 55
12. Procédé suivant la revendication 11, comprenant en outre le fait que l'obturateur est déplacé dans la

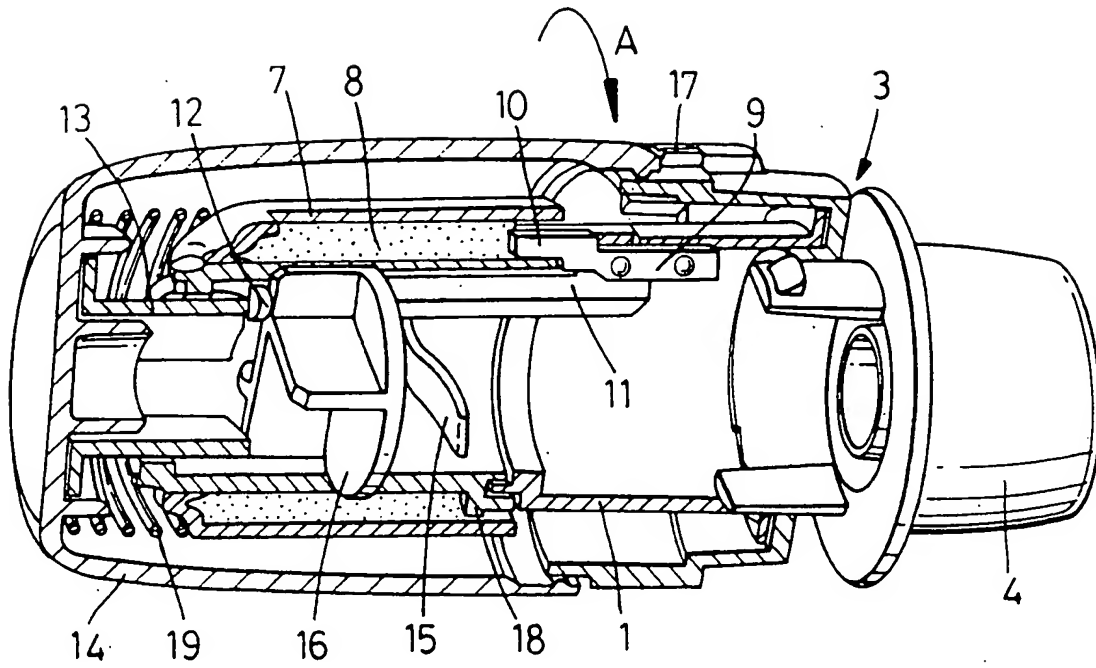


Fig. 1

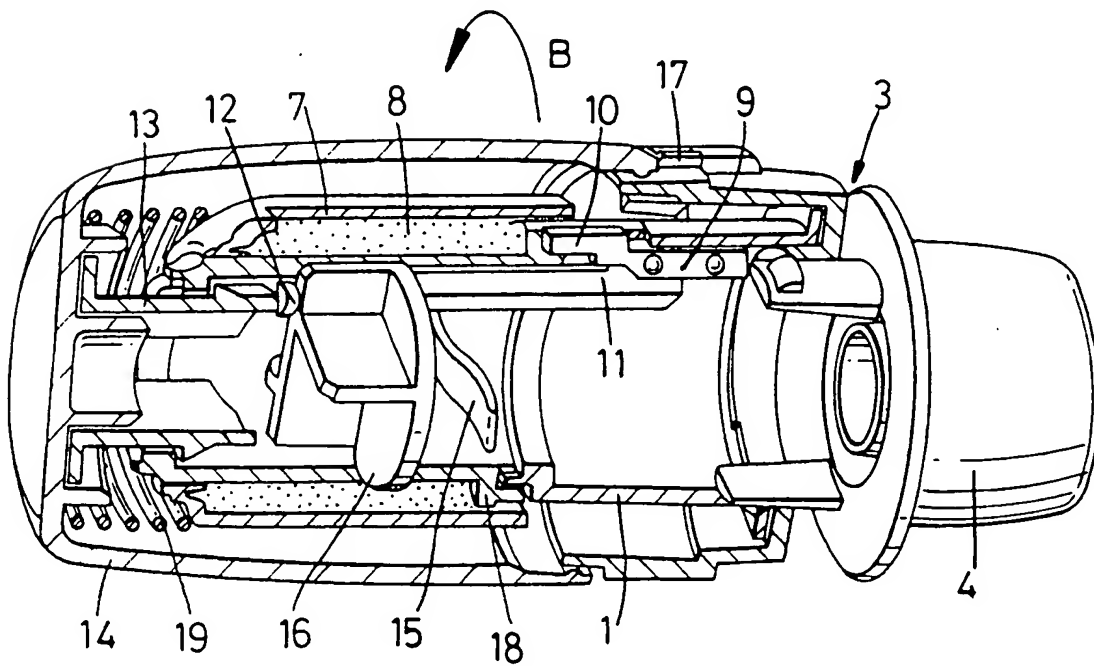


Fig. 2

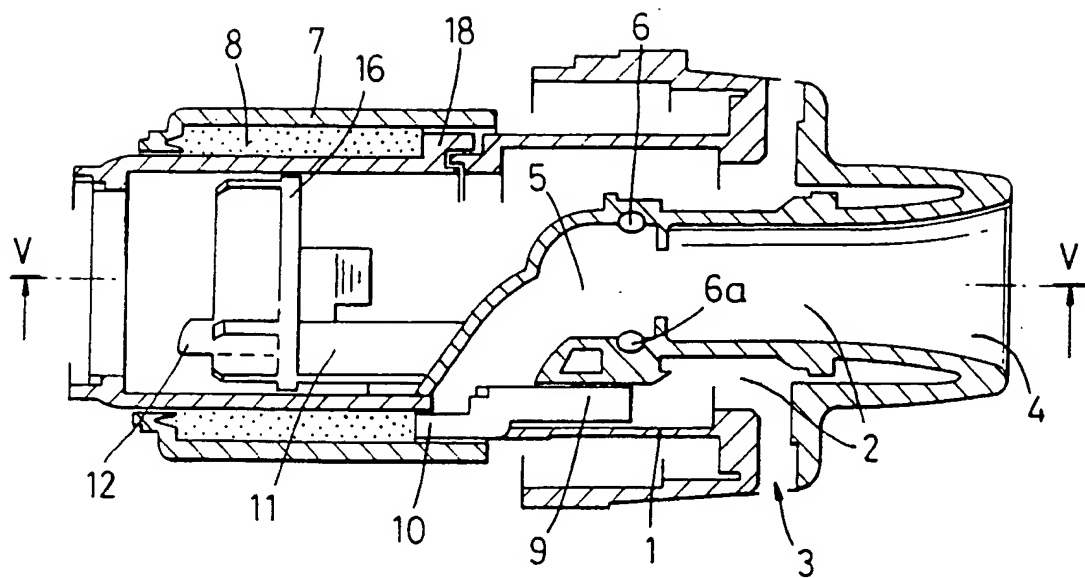


Fig. 3

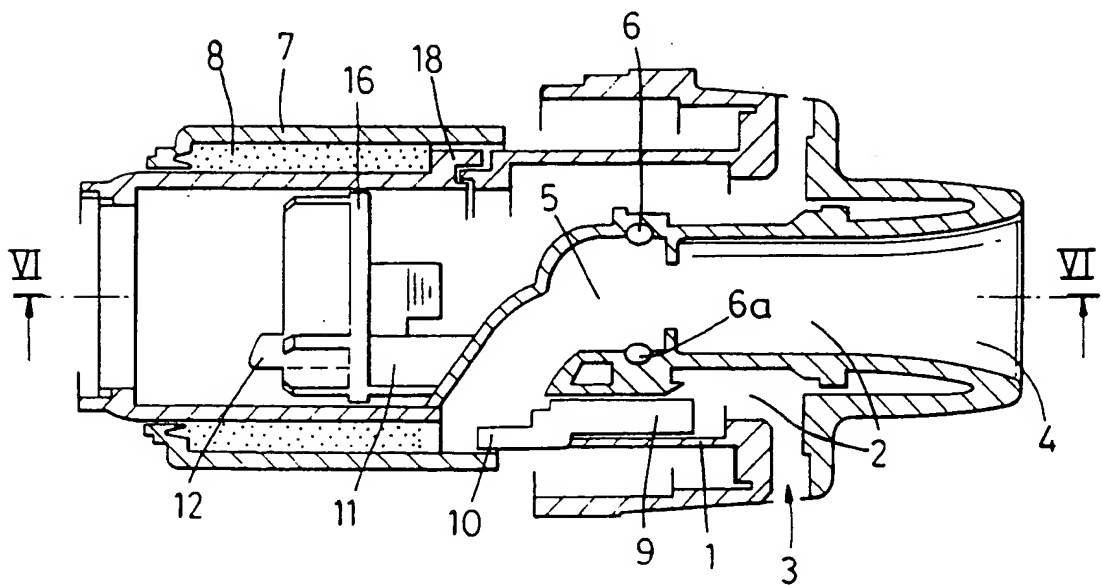


Fig. 4

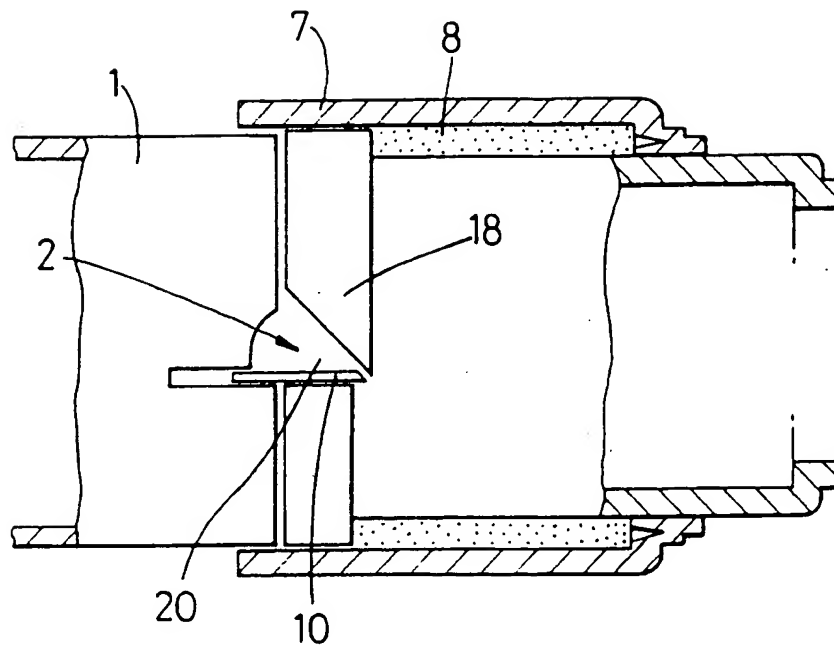


Fig. 5

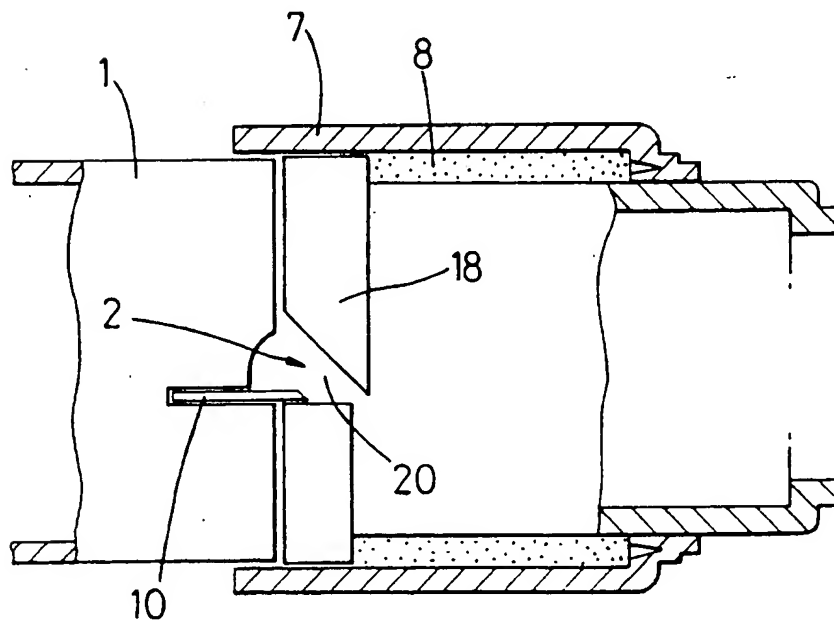


Fig. 6